



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to the Report by the Head of the OSCE Office in Yerevan

As delivered by Chargé d' Affaires Kyle Scott
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
June 14, 2007

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Pryakin,

As the Austrians say, we meet you today with “one eye crying and the other eye laughing.” While we are certainly sorry to say goodbye to you as Head of the Office in Yerevan, we are pleased to receive the positive review of your accomplishments and we are looking forward to working with you as Head of the Center in Dushanbe. In your tenure of almost four years in Armenia, you have proven yourself a leader who has persevered while understanding that the development of democracy is as important and challenging as the practice of democracy itself. Your objectivity, honesty, and dedication to OSCE ideals have earned our gratitude. Thank you for your service.

Mr. Chairman, while there are many aspects of the work of the Office that bear mentioning here today, I will confine myself to a few. The Armenian elections were indeed a clear improvement for Armenia. They were one of the most important political events in the OSCE calendar this year. The United States remains dedicated to working with the OSCE Office to help Armenia address issues ODIHR highlights in its final report.

In the economic and environmental dimension, the United States welcomes news of Armenia's rapid overall development. We share Armenia's enthusiasm for the small regional office in the Syunik province. This area is the most remote in Armenia, where the eradication of poverty is the most important goal. Field presences away from capitals are a good way for the OSCE to reach more citizens, and this office is a prime example of creative thinking and the direct people-to-people contact that makes the OSCE so unique.

The police assistance program is another activity of the Office that the United States rates highly in the Political and Military dimension. The new community policing program in Yerevan's Arabkir district is an example of the value that the OSCE can bring.

We are all of course familiar with the rocket-fuel elimination program, which is expected to end in August, on time and on budget. The program has become the model for future projects in other countries where this volatile melange fuel is stored in dangerous and difficult circumstances. The United States is especially impressed with the positive results of the recent environmental- impact report, as well as by the excellent safety record for the workers on- site throughout the duration of the project.

In closing, Mr. Ambassador, we salute your achievements and those of your colleagues at the Office in Yerevan. The United States wishes you well in Dushanbe.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.